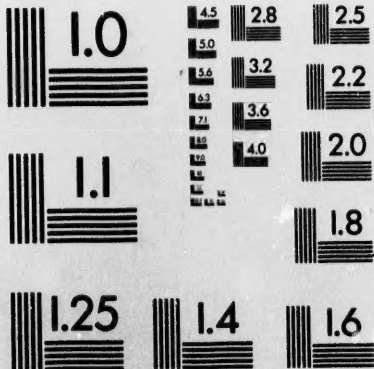


# MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

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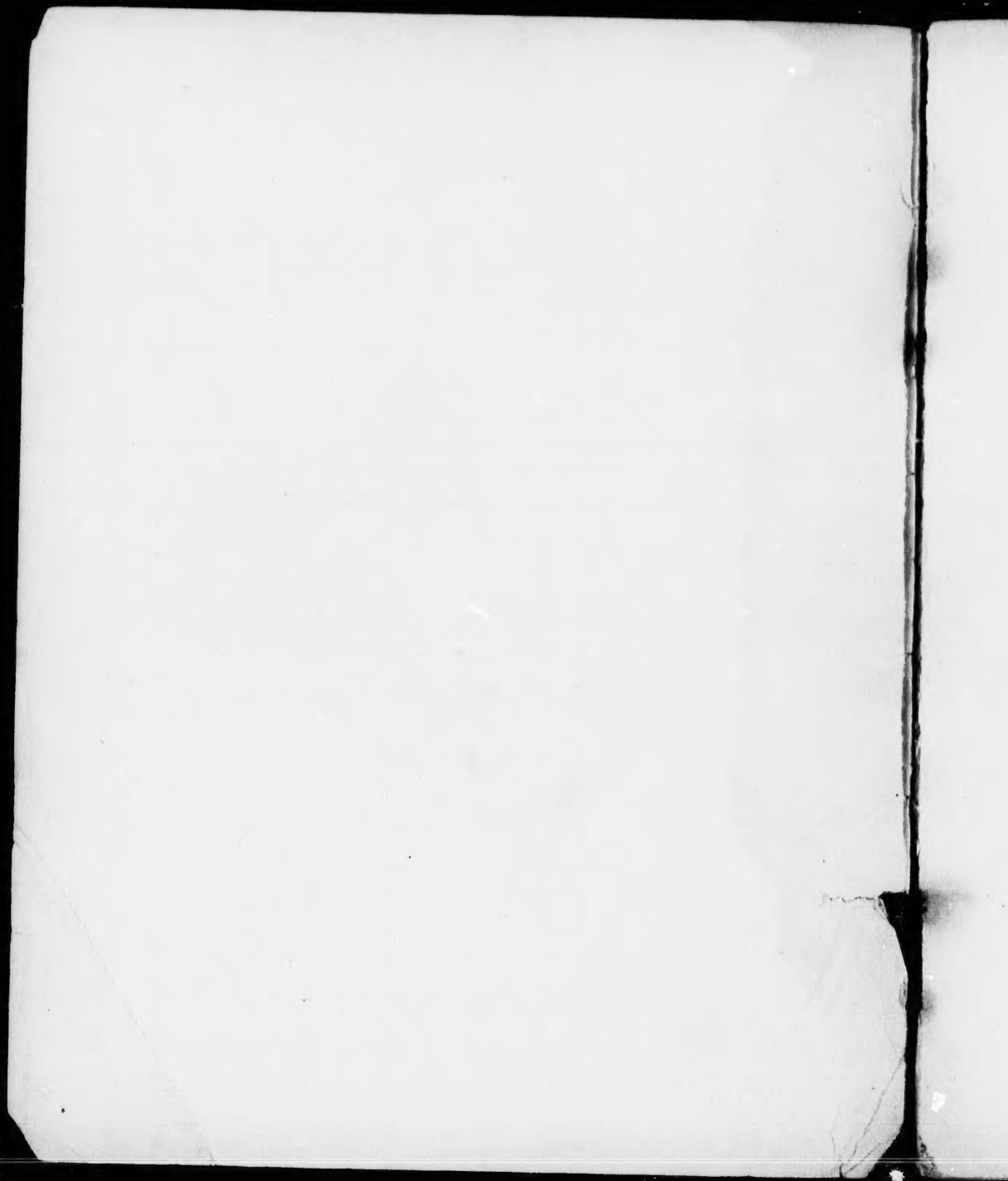
Brockville  
BROCKVILLE, ONT.  
St. JOHN'S-CHURCH  
Souvenir of St. John's Church.



Church Burned Feb. 12th, 1899.  
Reopened Feb. 11th, 1900.



*"I was glad when they said  
unto me, Let us go into the  
house of God."*



*“Recollection is the only paradise  
from which we cannot be turned out.”*

*This is simply a recollection, not a  
History, we would mark the beginning  
of the new with a recalling of the old.*

"One of the most disastrous fires which Brockville has experienced in late years, occurred early yesterday morning, and as a result St. John's Presbyterian Church, situated on the corner of King and Park streets, and long looked upon as a familiar landmark, is to day but a heap of blackened ruins. All that practically remains of the fine structure, remodelled and almost rebuilt a few years ago, are the walls, tower and portion of the basement."

The above note appeared in the Daily Recorder on Monday, February 13th, 1899, and the members of St. John's Church knew that it was only too true. Yet this like many fires has proved to be a blessing, for while the old "familiar landmark" still remains, the new St. John's is better and brighter, and the congregation stronger than ever. To-day as we take possession of our new Church home, our minds naturally go back over the sixty years that lie behind us as a congregation, and we would lovingly recall some of the men and events of the past.

The available records are very meagre in their information concerning the beginning of St. John's. In 1835 and 1836 a number of families, principally from Scotland, decided to form a congregation to be known as The Church of Brockville in connection with the Established Church of Scotland.

There had already been in existence for a number of years the First Church, under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Smart, but it was not in connection with the "Auld Kirk" and so a branch of the Kirk was formed, and history has not proved that these pioneers made a mistake. Their theology was said to be narrow, but it was deep and high. They left an heritage of truth, and their memory is still an inspiration. Their children have risen up to bless them in the gates.

The first record of St. John's is the following:—"At Brockville, the 18th day of June, 1837, which day the Kirk Session of the Church of Brockville, in connection with the Established Church of Scotland, met for the first time within the District Court House.

SEDERUNT—The Rev. Peter Colin Campbell, Moderator; James Morris, Esquire, and John MacDonald, Elders."

Though this is the first minute recorded, the congregation must have been organized some time before, as in the Presbyterian Church the election of Elders and the calling of a Minister are not accomplished in a week.

The Rev. P. C. Campbell was the first minister, having been sent out by the Church of Scotland. He remained pastor of the Church until 1842, and was then called to a professorship in Queen's College, and afterwards was made principal of the College in Aberdeen. The



REV. DUNCAN MORRISON, D.D.

Helen Johnstoun, Matthew Kerr, Elizabeth Long, John McCreath, Jean McCreath, Christian McDonald, Elizabeth McDonald, Matthew McDougall, Mary McEwan, Anne Jane McKie, Jane McMillan, Elizabeth Malloch, William F. Mendell, George Nelson, Thos. Richardson, Mary Robison, William Smith, Janet Smith, Alex. Spalding, Elizabeth Spalding, William Watson, Anne Willham.

Fifty-one names in all and how few are left. Margaret Davidson, now Mrs. Hamilton of Lyn, is still alive and interested in everything pertaining to St. John's, James Hall and Janet Hall also are living in Toronto, the rest

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was observed for the first time, the last Sabbath in the year 1837. It may be of interest to some to know the names of those who composed the first communion roll:

James Morris, John MacDonald, John Anderson, Agnes Anderson, Janet Bilton, Annie Crichton, Isabella Campbell, John Cranstoun, Katherine Cranstoun, Archibald Davidson, Christina Davidson, Margaret Davidson, Mary Donahoe, Margaret Fergusson, William Freeland, Helen Freeland, Henry Freeland, Elizabeth Gilmour, Mary Gilmour, James Hall, Janet Hall, Barbara Hume, Agnes Hutcheson, Mary Hogg, John Jardine, Jean Jardine,

have joined the general assembly of the Church of the first born. In 1844 the Rev. Mr. Cruikshank was settled as pastor, and remained only a few months when he was called to Niagara. Up to this time the congregation had no regular place of worship. The meetings were held first in the Court House, and then for a time in a building belonging to a Mr. Mair, but in 1844 the congregation went back to the Court House, and in that year took steps to build a Church.

In July, 1844, at a meeting of the congregation the following were appointed a building committee—Messrs. Malloch, Hume, Reid, Smith, Bland, J. Morris and Robert Watson, and on May 4th, 1847, Norman MacDonald, Robert Peden, Alexander Morris and Andrew McKie were added to the committee.

From 1842 to 1855 were trying years to the congregation. The greater part of that time there was no settled pastor, though it was in these years the Church was built.

Mr. Cruikshank's successor was Rev. Thos. Haigh, a licentiate sent out by the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland. Mr. Haigh only remained two or three years, though from the records it is very difficult to ascertain the particular facts as to ministers, Church or congregation.

Some interesting items are recorded however, as to the personell of the membership, and it is worthy of note that the Church at large has been strengthened over and over again by the men and women who have gone forth from St. John's.

At the September Communion of 1849, Mr. John McKerras,



REV. DANIEL MCGILLIVRAY.

Margaret and Jane McKerras were received into the membership of the Church.

Margaret McKerras, now Mrs. Blair of Prescott, is perhaps the oldest living child of St. John's, and is still able to take a deep interest in the Church of her childhood, and in everything pertaining to the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Her father Mr. John McKerras, was an elder for many years, and her brother was the Rev. John McKerras, the late beloved Professor of Queen's College.



REV. DR. JARDINE.

In 1851, the Rev. John Whyte was called to the pastorate; his stipend being £120 per annum. It was in this year or the year following that the new Church was opened. There is no record anywhere of the event, though the letting of the pews, and the appointment of a doorkeeper, at a salary of two shillings and sixpence per week if possible, are recorded. The work of a congregation was simple then as compared with the congregation of to-day. The only organization required was the Sabbath school, and the only mid-week meeting besides the Prayer meeting, was an evening set apart for practicing the psalm tunes. The music was led by a Precentor without any choir or organ, and in many cases the congregational singing was much in advance of what it is to-day.

For the year 1859, Mr. Alex. Stenhouse was engaged as



Precentor, at a salary of £12 per annum, one condition being that he should give one evening a week for practice of congregational singing. In 1856, Rev. Duncan Morrison was settled as pastor, and remained until the close of the year 1855. Mr. Morrison's work in St. John's was eminently successful as seen in the growth of the congregation during his ministry, and the recorded testimony of the members and adherents. On his acceptance of a call to Owen Sound, very appreciative addresses were presented to him from congregation and Sabbath school, accompanied with a purse of \$130.00.

It was during the years of Mr. Morrison's ministry that a number of men, whose names are more familiar to the present generation, came into prominence in connection with the Church. Mr. George Hutcheson, Mr. J. Thomson, Mr. John Grant, and Mr. John Wright, were elected Trustees in 1857, and their loyalty to St. John's can be read on every page of the records.

Within a few weeks after Mr. Morrison's resignation, a call was extended to Mr. Smith, of Melbourne, the late Rev. Dr. J. C. Smith of St. Andrews, Guelph. Mr. Smith declining the call, Dr. Muir of Lindsay was called. He too decided to remain in Lindsay, and in June 1867, a unanimous call was extended to Rev. Daniel McGillivray, which was accepted.

Mr. McGillivray remained pastor until 1880, when he was



REV. ALEX. MACGILLIVRAY.

succeeded by Rev. Dr. Jardine, who was called in March, 1881, remaining until the close of 1886.

During these two pastorates many changes were made in the congregation, and the records present interesting items, showing the gradual development from the old forms to the new, while

the Church and congregation kept pace, in the enlargement of the one, and the steady increase of membership in the other.

Up to 1873, the singing was led, as stated before, by a precentor; but in that year a very important departure was made, the introduction of an organ. It was a sad day for some of the people, as they believed "they could no longer worship God according to their 'ain conscience," and it caused some to leave the Church. However, the Session wisely guarded their rights and were determined



REV. C. J. CAMERON.

this new "implement" should not take from them any power. The Session adopted the following resolution with regard to the use of the instrument:—1. That in the service of praise the Church organ shall give the tune, beginning and ending with the singing.

The years '74 and '75 were stirring years for all branches of

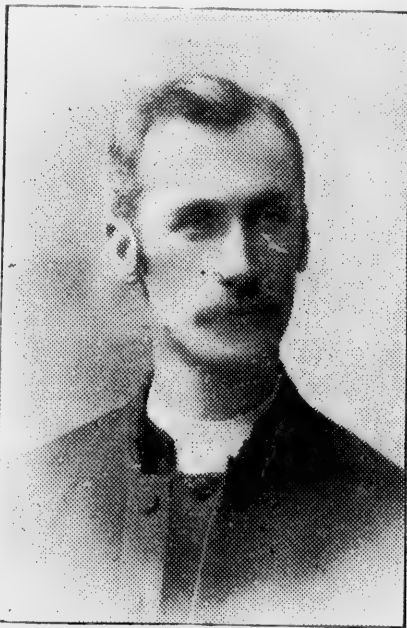
the Presbyterian Church in Canada, as it was then that the subject of union between the Kirk, the Free, and the United Presbyterian Churches was discussed by Congregations and Presbyteries.

In many congregations in connection with the Kirk, the feeling against union was intense.

The disruption of '43 was still remembered by many, while with those who could not remember, the tradition was even stronger. Families were divided and the best friends became enemies; but happily in Brockville the feeling was not so intense. The matter was disposed of by St. John's Session in March, '74. The Session then was composed of Col. McDougall, James Hall, James Langskail and Mr. Hamilton. The basis of union was accepted by the Session only James Langskail dissenting from the finding.

As late as '76 the Session agreed that all Baptisms take place in the Church except in cases of absolute necessity, otherwise application must be made in writing to the Session. Now it seems as if the injunction had gone forth that no baptism should take place in the Church, except under very special circumstances.

Shortly after the advent of the organ in '73, the next inevitable advance was the singing of hymns, and we find the Scottish



REV. D. STRACHAN.

Hymnal introduced in '74. In '81 this gave place to the Hymnal of the Canada Church. At this time the choir discovered that their organ was out of date. A new one with all modern improvements could be got very reasonably, and this was resolved on. The description of the new instrument is in the minute book of the Board of Trustees, and is as follows: One organ, style 200, two banks of keys and 18 stops inclusive of grand organ, price \$650.00.

The Committee who arranged the matter of purchase and payment of same were W. R. Bain, Robt. McLenahan and J. D. Smith. This was the organ that very wisely remained in the Vestry for a number of years, until it was burnt, and thus became more valuable through its insurance than it ever had been.

In 1882, the Church having become too small it was decided to enlarge. The first step taken was to appoint a building committee, to prepare plans and specifications and ask for tenders on the same.

The committee consisted of Mr. G. Hutcheson, Hon. J. W. Christie, Mr. Robt. Wright and Mr. R. McLenahan.

It was found that the lowest tender was \$8,000 to complete the enlargement, and after discussion it was agreed that when \$4000 was subscribed the committee were to go on with the building. At that meeting \$3350 was subscribed, and no difficulty was found in securing the rest. After everything was completed the total cost seems to have been \$9000, including the Vestry which cost nearly \$1000.

The opening services were on Sabbath, Nov. 12th, 1882, when Principal McVicar of Montreal, Dr. Milligan of Toronto, and Dr. Mitchell, of Belleville, were the preachers of the day. Dr. Milligan giving a lecture the Monday evening following.

Even in those days when soloists and anthems were not much thought of, choir matters were not pleasant. For many months the principal business with which the Kirk Session had to do was adjusting and readjusting matters among the musicians, deciding what was involved in the term "*Leader*," who

should have the choosing of the hymns, and tunes, and many other things all too trivial for grown up men.

Dr. Jardine resigned the pastorate of St. John's Church in October, 1886, to accept an appointment of the Home Mission Committee at Prince Albert, N.W.T.

In May, 1887, the Rev. Alex. Macgillivray of Williamstown was called, and having accepted was duly settled, and continued as pastor until March, 1891.

He was succeeded by Rev. Charles J. Cameron, of Cannington, who was called in July 6th, 1891, and tendered his resignation the 8th of November, 1895, to accept a call from the Fourth Presbyterian Church, Boston. These two pastorates are both so fresh in the memories of nearly all the present congregation, that nothing need be recalled to record in these pages. Their work is yet bearing fruit in every department of the congregation.

Through Mr. McGillivray's energies the Church was freed from debt for the first time in many years.

In Mr. Cameron's pastorate the interior of Church was thoroughly renewed, and a pipe organ placed in position which made the Church comfortable and attractive. In '92 the present manse was finished and occupied for the first time by Mr. Cameron.

The present pastorate began Sept. 8th, 1897. It is not history yet and therefore has no place here.

In this brief sketch of St. John's congregation, the writer is conscious of how inadequate it is. The most important parts had to be left. These must be filled in by the reader's imagination, for who can record the devotion and loyalty and self sacrifice, of all these noble men and women, who gave so freely of themselves for the Master's cause in St. John's.

We have a Malloch bequest, we have an Elizabeth Gilmour manse, and had we the privilege we could see on nearly every stone, the name of some family whose devotion left the congregation richer.

The pulpit of St. John's is also rich in associations.

Dr. Cook, of Quebec ; Dr. Williamson, of Queen's ; Dr. George, of Queen's ; Prof. McKerras, of Queen's ; Dr. Barclay, of Toronto ; Dr. Norman McLeod, of Glasgow ; Principal Snodgrass, of Queen's, and many others of the Old Kirk days, were the preachers at St. John's on the great occasions.

She has also given of her sons to the Church.

Prof. McKerras, Dr. Campbell, the present Moderator of Assembly ; Rev. W. C. McLean of Oak Lake ; Rev. J. W. Muirhead, of Whitewood, all went from St. John's, and they are all worthy of her best traditions.

The congregation at present is in a most prosperous condition. Ever since the fire which bulks more largely than any other event, a new life and energy has come. In March a building committee was appointed, Robert Wright, Chairman ; W. B. Smellie, Secretary ; and Messrs. James Publow, E. A. Geiger, W. B. Reynolds, John Grant, W. B. Thompson, A. G. Dobbie, Geo. Robertson, Geo. Wright.

For the Committee it has been a busy year, much thought and energy have been expended, but on account of the unity, and enthusiasm of the members, the work has been pleasant ; and now St. John's Church is one of the handsomest and most comfortable in the province.

The congregation itself is well organized for work. The Sabbath School is prosperous ; the Young People have a vigorous Society ; and the Missionary Societies are all accomplishing much, and now with the stimulus of a new Church, greater things are still expected.

“The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former saith the Lord of Hosts : and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts.”

For the benefit of those who are separated far from their Church home, it may be stated that now St. John's is one of the handsomest Churches in the Province, with a Sabbath School and Lecture Room that is not surpassed anywhere.

The woodwork throughout is in polished oak, while the carpet, and decorations on wall and ceiling are in perfect harmony.

The organ is placed in the west end, with choir and pulpit immediately in front.

There have been many gifts from the friends of St. John's among which are two furnaces from Mr. J. M. Gill, a Communion table from Rev. Alex. McGillivray, \$100 from Mrs. A. S. Ault, \$100 from Mr. James Cumming of Lyn, \$50 from Dr. Malloch of Hamilton, and many other similar ones.

The Pastor of St. John's has undertaken the debt of the organ himself, and he will be very glad to hear from many more of the loyal friends.

